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WORKERS WORLD

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More fallout from Israeli massacre

Global solidarity with Palestine

By LeiLani Dowell

International outrage and determined actions continue to demand an end to the blockade of Gaza, as autopsy reports confirm the utter brutality of Israel's May 31 attack on a flotilla of humanitarian aid.

The autopsy revealed that all nine activists killed by Israeli commandoes on the Mavi Marmara, the lead ship in the Freedom Flotilla, were killed by gunshot wounds. The nine Turkish men — who ranged in age from 19 to 61 and, except for the youngest, were all fathers — were shot a total of 30 times. Five were killed by gunshots either to the back of the head or in the back. (British Guardian, June 5)

Flotilla participant Ismail Patel told the Guardian how he witnessed one man shot directly between the eyes. He noted that 48 other participants suffered gunshot wounds, and that six remained missing.

Meanwhile, a ship of courageous activists from Ireland and Malaysia made another attempt to deliver much-needed aid. The ship, named the Rachel Corrie in honor of the slain U.S. activist, was a member of the Freedom Flotilla. It had been delayed due to technical problems. Corrie was killed by Israel Defense Forces in 2003, when they bulldozed the Palestinian home she was kneeling in front of.

Israeli commandoes boarded the Rachel Corrie on June 5, arrested everyone aboard and brought it to the Israeli port of Ashdod.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu attempted to use the "peaceful"

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BP OIL DISASTER

Profit system pits jobs vs. environment

By Gene Clancy

It is an unforgettable, heartbreaking image. A seabird from Grand Island, La., lies in a basket, covered with a thick brownish layer of oil, gasping for air and blinking its eyes as if in stunned amazement.

As BP announced that its latest "fix" had been partially successful, this and other images of devastation from around the Gulf of Mexico region have brought home the enormity of the crime which BP and its capitalist collaborators have perpetrated. The so-called containment cap which was lowered into place on June 4 has had limited success: only about a third of the 750,000 gallons per day gushing from the destroyed wellhead is being siphoned off.

Why is it that we are moved by images of dying birds? On an immediate level is the empathy we have for the life and suffering of other sentient beings with whom we share the planet. But in a more profound sense, it is because at some deep level we realize that the destruction of these birds and their habitats is also an attack on our own habitat, and on our own ability to survive and make a living, although the devastation may not be as immediately obvious.

When the Deepwater Horizon exploded on April 20, killing 11 workers, employees from at least 13 different companies were on board. Besides high-level engineers from Transocean, which operated the rig, and BP, which held the lease on it, the workers included welders, divers, rig roustabouts, cooks, tank washers and laundry workers employed by a medley of subcontracted companies. And for each exploration and production job, there are an estimated four supporting jobs in and around the region.

There are 5,000 offshore oil and gas platforms in Louisiana alone, many of which can be seen from the coast, in addition to 17 oil refineries, 74,000 miles of pipeline and 90 major chemical plants. The Louisiana port system is the largest in the world with six deepwater, eight coastal and 13 inland ports. Port Fourchon itself handles 90 percent of the traffic servicing the deep-water oil and gas industry in the Gulf. These facilities exist side by side with a commercial and sport fishing industry which brings in $2.5 billion annually. There is also a

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PHILADELPHIA

PHOTO: KELLY VALDEZ

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Letter to the editor

Being sacrificed on the altar of corruption?

On April 25, 2009, a concerned father dialed 911 and requested Cleveland police mediation because he feared his adult daughter would drive her vehicle after coming home from a dinner date where she'd consumed alcohol. CPD responded to the call — with two officers which increased to 10-12 later who were all Caucasian — the family is African-American — in the Collinwood area by punching the daughter in the face and body, kicking, body slamming, and tasering her. They then charged **Rebecca Whitby** with **assault on them** and a myriad of other felonies while charging the mother (also named Rebecca) with multiple charges including **obstruction of justice** for attempting to use her body as a shield to protect her daughter from the vicious beating.

This abridged version of these events, which Caucasian neighbors corroborate, is explained in detail on the family's website at thealhambraincident.ning.com. The purpose of this narrative however, is to explore a different aspect of this case.

Firstly, despite GOP opinion, this is **not** a post-racial society and every racial discrimination claim is not an unjustifiable playing of the "race card." There are powerful people in law enforcement, government, business (and the judiciary) who believe their perceptions of minorities fueled by generational odium, superiority complexes, long-standing racial entitlements forged by hundreds of years of accepted societal practices, as well as other associated malignancies, give them the latitude to augment the rights and liberties of others in a manner inconsistent with evaluations of similar circumstances involving their own family members or those who reside in areas resembling "their neighborhoods."

Prosecutors would have you believe that a 125-pound, 23-year-old female college student with no criminal record and no reason to throw her freedom away, attacked two police officers each weighing nearly two hundred pounds and was able to take both their weapons. This despite the fact that police officers are specifically trained in submission tactics designed to subdue assailants much larger than young Rebecca.

Additionally, one of these "stellar" public servants allegedly lied on a Bureau of Workman's Compensation claim saying young Rebecca was high on "wet" when she supposedly attacked him although the toxicology report clearly showed only alcohol in her system. If this officer can make such statements to obtain Workman's Compensation payments, why would I (or any juror) believe he wouldn't do the same under oath?

Police brutality is rampant in America. Even Paul Craig Roberts, the former assistant secretary of the Treasury during the Reagan Administration wrote an article in 2007 entitled "America's Police Brutality Pandemic." Roberts said police are often guilty of "unprovoked gratuitous violence against persons offering no resistance such as the elderly, **women, students**, and elected officials. Americans are not safe anywhere from police. Police attack Americans in university libraries, in public meetings, and **in their own homes**." Young Rebecca was a student and both mother and daughter endured this travesty "in their own home."

Another powerful conveyance by Roberts targets the sidestepping of responsibility by police. Roberts states that rather than own up to their misdeeds, "Instead the cops cover up their own crimes by arresting their victims on false charges that are invented to justify the unprovoked police violence against citizens." He went on to add, "No matter how gratuitous and violent the police brutality, a 'free' American citizen can defend himself only at the expense, if not of his life, of a long stay in prison."

A local journalist, Kathy Wray Coleman, wrote an intriguing article on May 22 tying together common threads of concern with respect to legal incongruities in the Whitby case, the case of Joaquin Hicks — who received 61 years for a crime his family and activists say it was impossible for him to have committed — and the Collinwood students arrested during a protest over teacher layoffs and school closings.

Coleman states that Judge Kathleen Sutula's appointment to the Whitby case after Judge Stuart Friedman recused himself for fear of being perceived a "racist" is more than a bit suspect. Coleman goes on to say Administrative Judge Nancy Fuerst handpicked Sutula rather than using the conventional "judge's pool" mechanism of selection.

Was this abuse of process? The evidence clearly points in that direction. Sutula has since recused herself as well and openly apologized to the Rebeccas.

In an imperfect world we have to tolerate imperfect systems, and yes that includes our criminal justice system. This is not to say, however, that we are to accept the notion that an honest mistake should ever be considered synonymous with premeditation and malice conveniently masked as error. It is said that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link; likewise, a criminal justice system that a society must depend on is only as honorable and just as the least ethical component within the framework of its practical application.

Dave Patterson
Former union leader,
a civic activist in Cleveland

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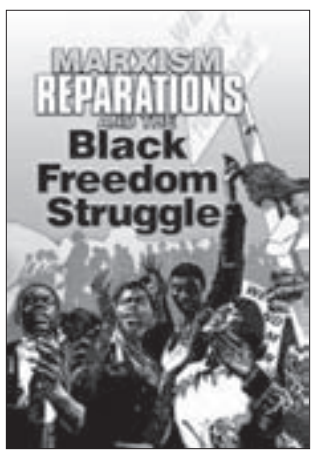

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery Sam Marcy
Black Youth: Repression & Resistance LeiLani Dowell
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Alabama's Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping and Segregation Consuela Lee
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Set for Washington, D.C.

Dick Gregory supports protest for Scott sisters

By Monica Moorehead

An important demonstration is scheduled for June 21 in Washington, D.C., to help bring national attention to the Scott sisters' case. Gladys and Jamie Scott have been unjustly imprisoned since October 1994 for the "crime" of stealing $11 from a store in Scott County, Mississippi.

The African-American sisters received life sentences following their convictions, which once again reflect the ongoing, heinous legacy of slavery in the U.S., especially in the South. Neither sister had a prior criminal record nor did any violence occur in the December 1993 robbery. In fact, witnesses and even the alleged robbery victims stated during the trial that the sisters were not involved in the robbery. All their appeals proving their innocence have been denied, including by the U.S. Supreme Court.

When the Scott sisters were sent to the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility, they were both healthy women. However, over the many years of being exposed to inhumane living conditions in the prison as well as the total lack of healthy food, Jamie Scott has developed stage 5 kidney failure, which requires dialysis. The next stage is death. She has been rushed to the hospital numerous times as a result of the terrible prison medical care.

Jamie and Gladys Scott

Nancy Lockhart, a paralegal who is a supporter of the Scott sisters, received a letter this May from Jamie Scott on life in prison where she stated: "I have witnessed many inmates die at the hands of this second-rate medical care. I do not want to be one of them."

The June 21 daylong protest is being organized by the Gray-Haired Witnesses for Justice to put pressure on the federal government to force Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour to release the Scott sisters from prison immediately. A 10 a.m. fast will take place at the office of U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, followed by a press conference in front of the White House at noon, with a formal appeal to President Obama. Then at Lafayette Square Park from 1 p.m. until 9 p.m., there will be a program of speakers and cultural performances.

Dick Gregory, long-time civil rights activist and comedian, has given public support to the June 21 action. In a June 3 press release, Gregory stated, "This is one of the worst cases I have ever heard of in my life. My jaw dropped when I read that these women have been in prison for almost 16 years and aren't even charged with laying a hand on anyone! This country should be embarrassed to have such a blatant travesty of justice exist while wagging our finger at people abroad for human rights abuses. What we have going on here is the epitome of cruel and unusual punishment and is outrageous, even for Mississippi!"

The Gray-Haired Witnesses are calling on all people of good will to join them on that day and demand justice for the Scott sisters and an end to the "oversentencing, degradation and dehumanization of Black women in this system and nation as a whole." A bus will be traveling from Mississippi to Washington, D.C., for the protest. For more information about the Scott sisters' case and support that is needed for the June 21 demonstration, visit www.freethescottsisters.blogspot.com. □

Profit system pits workers vs. environment

Continued from page 1

large tourism industry.

BP has released an ad campaign costing an estimated $50 million in which its CEO, Tony Hayward, promises to clean up the mess that BP caused. Of course, Hayward will do nothing — it is an army of thousands of workers who will actually perform the cleanup tasks.

On May 27, the U.S. Interior Department issued a six-month moratorium on deep-water drilling in the Gulf in order to "determine what went wrong and how to remedy safety deficiencies." The moratorium most directly affects 17 oil companies, including multinational giants like BP, Exxon Mobil, Shell and Chevron, that were forced to shut down operations at 33 rigs.

Most environmental scientists have said that six months is woefully inadequate. However, the oil and gas industries of Louisiana, and the politicians associated with them, are already complaining. Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, who has been quite vocal in decrying the destruction of the environment along the Gulf Coast, was nevertheless very critical of the moratorium. "During one of the most challenging economic periods in decades, the last thing we need is to enact public policies that will certainly destroy thousands of existing jobs while preventing the creation of thousands more," he said in a letter to President Barack Obama.

The environment versus jobs?

Whenever a capitalist corporation perceives a threat to its profits, it is quick to threaten the workers with the loss of jobs. Workers know from bitter experience that these are not idle threats. Capitalists like to portray themselves as benevolent demigods who bestow jobs on those who are "deserving." But for most workers, their jobs are their only means of survival. When employers threaten workers with losing their jobs, they threaten workers' very survival.

The workers in the Gulf region are in many ways similar to those in the coal mines of Appalachia. They perform difficult, dangerous jobs for companies that rape the environment and ruin nearby communities. Because they operate in economically depressed areas, the companies attempt to divide working people by pitting those most impacted by the destruction of the environment against those who actually work in the mines and on the drilling rigs.

A list of 100 of the "Most Popular Jobs Where the Majority of Workers Do Not Have College Educations" published for New Orleans, shows a preponderance of jobs related to the oil, gas, shipping and chemical industries. (CityTowninfo.com) Invariably these are also among the highest paying jobs. The bosses tell the workers that they must choose between not befouling and destroying their surroundings and a decent-paying (although often dirty and dangerous) job.

These bosses are not really concerned about saving workers' jobs. Some environmentalists have noted that should the present oil slick migrate to areas where other drilling platforms are located, those rigs would be forced to shut down indefinitely anyway. The real concern of the Gulf-area capitalists is more related to globalization than to any modest moratorium on drilling. They don't want rig owners and operators to cancel their contracts and move operations to the coastal areas of Africa or Brazil or elsewhere abroad.

Poor and working people should not be forced to choose between a clean habitat and a decent-paying job. Unlike the oil-soaked seabirds of the Gulf, workers and oppressed peoples have the consciousness and the power to fight the vicious capitalist system and ultimately create a society in which the contradictions between humans and the natural environment are at last resolved. □

Struggle generates jobs resolution

By Vidya Sankar
Raleigh, N.C.

On May 18 a resolution supporting a federal jobs program and opposing cuts to federal youth programs was passed by the Raleigh City Council.

Chants of "A job is right, we gotta fight fight fight!" and "Money for jobs and education, not for banks and incarceration!" greeted Raleigh City Council members at recent meetings. Two well-attended rallies at Raleigh City Council meetings on May 4 and May 18 were organized by the Raleigh Peoples' Assembly.

At these rallies a multigenerational mass of youth, students, workers and community leaders spoke out resoundingly on the necessity of a public jobs program, and for the city of Raleigh to publicly advocate for and demand that such a jobs program be implemented as within the best interest of city residents.

A resolution underscoring these demands had been presented to the City Council. The resolution, in its original text, demanded that the city support and demand a public sector jobs program with the minimal size and shape of the Works Progress Administration, which created over 8 million jobs and was a form of real economic recovery during the Great Depression.

The resolution also demanded that the city oppose all funding cuts to federal youth summer programs, and support that job applications be reviewed with no emphasis on one's criminal record. The resolution, drafted by leaders of the Peoples' Assembly, also emphasized the need for youth after-school and summer programs and jobs, the currently unenforced Full Employment Act of 1978, and the dire need to relieve extreme understaffing in city departments by hiring more workers.

Community support included more than a thousand petition signatures supporting the resolution. Hundreds of groups and community leaders endorsed the resolution, and at the rallies themselves many passersby honked their cars' horns and fist-pumped in support. Inside the meetings, community leaders and organizers spoke to the need for a public jobs program and how the additional jobs created could produce services which the city so desperately needs.

"Without jobs, we won't have the funds to take care of our basic needs, which are shelter, clothes, food, and also being able to pay the bills that are going to come," stated Juanette Williams, a student at Peace College. "If they're (the city of Raleigh) not providing for or helping your residents, then they're not carrying out what they're preaching."

Protest outside Raleigh, N.C. Municipal Building demands jobs.

WW PHOTO: VIDYA SANKAR

The City Council voted unanimously May 18 to support two tenets of the jobs resolution: that Raleigh would willingly participate in any federal public jobs program implemented, and that it would oppose any cuts in federal funding to youth summer recreation and jobs programs.

"The support of such a resolution will have a ripple effect throughout the city. The vision for gaps to be narrowed between 'the haves' and the 'have nots' is in its initial stages. However, there is a need to see the fruits from this resolution. ... Lip service is not enough," commented Larry Murry, a leader in Black Workers for Justice and the Peoples' Assembly.

The Raleigh Peoples' Assembly is comprised of groups including Black Workers for Justice; the People's Empowerment Movement; Fight Imperialism, Stand Together; the Raleigh City Workers Union — UE 150; and various other organizations.

Union unites with LGBTQ groups to target hotel

By Ed Childs and Frank Neisser
Boston

A powerful and historic alliance has developed here between hotel and restaurant workers represented by UNITE HERE and the lesbian/gay/bi/trans/queer community, through support and struggle for each other's causes.

UNITE HERE, which represents 300,000 workers, has been waging a heroic but tough battle with the Hyatt hotel chain. Hyatt has been conducting a brutal campaign to slash wages and triple medical insurance costs, effectively putting health care out of the reach of most of the workers.

In Boston, Hyatt's management forced room attendants to train temporary workers. They then fired all 100 of the regular attendants and replaced them with the temporary workers, who were paid half the union workers' wages and received no benefits.

The Boston Hyatt workers responded by calling for a boycott of Hyatt hotels. UNITE HERE has taken this up and is organizing internationally in support. In San Francisco, the union is conducting a boycott of nine Hyatt hotels and their affiliates. The list of targeted hotels may grow in an effort to defend the workers' basic rights.

The Hyatt Corp. has also been guilty of attacking communities of oppressed workers, including the LGBTQ communities in California. For instance, Doug Manchester, who owns the San Diego Hyatt hotel, gave $125,000 to put the anti-gay-marriage Proposition 8 on the ballot.

Determined to challenge Hyatt, LGBTQ organizations have united with union workers to mobilize the LGBTQ community in support of the Hyatt boycott. UNITE HERE and the LGBTQ community have combined campaigns to form Sleep with the Right People. Among the organizers and initiators is Cleve Jones, a founder of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt and an organizer of the successful Coors boycott, as well as a close collaborator with Harvey Milk. (See sleepwiththerightpeople.org.)

In San Francisco, this strong alliance inspired a spontaneous and creative way to express the campaign's message. Groups such as San Francisco Pride at Work/HAVOQ, One Struggle One Fight and the Brass Liberation Orchestra have been organizing "flash mob infiltrations" of Hyatt hotels.

On May 8, a large group marched into the Westin St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco and performed an exciting musical and dance adaptation of Lady Gaga's song "Bad Romance," reworded to say, "Don't be caught in a bad hotel." This audacious action right in the hotel's grand lobby, in front of scores of guests, supported the workers' demands and promoted the boycott. Look up "bad hotel" on YouTube to see the video.

Showing the strength of this union/LGBTQ community alliance, UNITE HERE has called on all its locals throughout the U.S. and Canada to organize contingents in their local LGBTQ Pride demonstrations in June. Each local is leafleting their members to build the contingents.

In Boston, Cleve Jones will be one of the Grand Marshals of the Pride Parade. He will march with the UNITE HERE Local 26 contingent. Stonewall Warriors will also be marching with the union's contingent.

This is the 40th anniversary of the Boston Pride march. As part of Pride's theme of continuing the fight for rights, the Stonewall Warriors contingent will show solidarity with immigrant workers and all workers, and it will support the Hyatt boycott. The contingent will also support the rights of LGBTQ youth to safe and supportive educational environments and to jobs.

Ed Childs is the chief shop steward for Local 26, UNITE HERE, representing the Harvard University cafeteria workers. Frank Neisser is an organizer and activist with Stonewall Warriors, a Boston LGBTQ activist organization that unites the LGBTQ struggle with those against war, racism, exploitation and injustice.

Gay Pride in West Virginia

West Virginia Pride held its 14th annual LGBTQ Pride Parade/Festival in the capital city of Charleston on June 6. The crowd of several thousand people attending was multigenerational and multinational, with significant transgender representation.

A parade kicked off the event, featuring contingents from W.Va. Pride, the ACLU, Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), Mountain State Bears and the Covenant House. Following the parade, people enjoyed live music and entertainment from mostly transgender performers.

Report and photo by Jeremy Radabaugh

Two choices for the UAW: Class struggle or suicide

Whose plants? Our plants

By Martha Grevatt

The United Auto Workers union, whose 35th Constitutional Convention begins June 14, is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. "I think we've hit bottom," stated outgoing President Ron Gettelfinger. (Detroit News, May 28) He was referring to the union's precipitous decline in membership — from 1.5 million at its peak to 750,000 in 2001 to less than half that today.

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Gettelfinger's growth prediction is based on thousands of new workers joining the UAW when General Motors, Ford and Chrysler hire workers making $14 an hour. Beyond that, it's hard to imagine workers wanting to join the union whose future members will, by Gettelfinger's own admission, not earn enough money to afford a new car.

To engage potential new members — and renew union interest among the rank and file now — the UAW must restore the traditions of its heroic past.

In 1937, after a 44-day occupation of GM plants in Flint, Mich., the UAW won recognition as bargaining agent for the workers. Membership soared. That year there were over 500 sit-down strikes. Charged with illegally seizing private property, unions argued that they were protecting their property rights — they owned their jobs. Yet in 1938 Congress voted to make sit-down strikes illegal.

Although the 1938 law has never been tested in court — and could be by raising the job as a property right — in modern times new legal arguments have been raised to empower workers to take over plants.

The Pittston Coal strike, which began April 5, 1989, is an example. Members of the United Mine Workers of America defied Taft-Hartley injunctions limiting pickets, drawing mass arrests and fines of millions of dollars. The strike's militant, creative tactics attracted worldwide attention; supporters from all over came to "Camp Solidarity." Yet the company was intransigent in its demands that the union make concessions.

On Sept. 17, 1989, ninety-eight miners and an allied clergyman approached two security cops guarding Pittston's Moss Number Three processing plant. "We are an unarmed, nonviolent inspection team of stockholders coming to inspect our investment," they said. (Jeremy Brecher, "Strike") The guards departed and the miners — all of whom owned at least one share of Pittston stock — occupied their "investment" for four days. None were arrested.

The takeover — called "Operation Flintstone," to honor the heroes of Flint — marked a turning point in the strike. On Dec. 31 miners approved a settlement that had almost none of the givebacks of Pittston's "final offer."

If UAW workers at Chrysler, Ford and GM attempted a similar "Operation," they would have a stronger legal case than the UMWA did. They could argue that they are defending the part of the company owned by a fund, set up in 2007, for their retiree health care.

The Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association was a concession, allowing a fixed contribution from the auto companies to free them of future so-called "legacy costs." The UAW took a risk that the fund might run dry. Last year, in the deal to rush Chrysler through bankruptcy, the Treasury Department ordered the union to take half the contribution in company stock — which gave the VEBA a majority stake. The VEBA, however, was allowed to appoint just one member to the New Chrysler board of directors. All the VEBA's equity is in nonvoting stock.

Minority shareholder Fiat, the government and the lenders — not the UAW — run Chrysler. Contrary to Glenn Beck and Rush Limbaugh's rants, this state-imposed gamble was not a good deal for autoworkers.

Nevertheless, the VEBA's majority stake could be a powerful legal defense if workers took over the fund's assets — their plants. Just as pensions represent deferred wages — as courts have ruled, for labor already performed — the VEBA represents deferred benefits. Like the pension fund, it — 55 percent ownership of Chrysler, 17.5 percent of GM and an unspecified percentage of Ford stock — belongs to the workers. The UAW also claims GM is withholding $450 million owed to the VEBA. That's over 10 times the amount that closed plants of recently bankrupt companies have been selling for. As a creditor the workers could claim the right to seize the assets of their delinquent debtor.

Workers everywhere were inspired by the United Electrical workers' 2008 takeover of Republic Windows and Doors. The company violated the workers' legal rights by not giving 60 days notice that the plant would close. President-elect Barack Obama sanctioned the action.

In the economically important auto industry, a sit-in would have a larger impact. The UAW would gain respect and attract workers in need of union representation. The rank and file would take pride and volunteer to help rebuild it as a fighting labor organization. When workers stay in they have more power; even in hard economic times a company cannot easily bring scabs into an occupied plant.

Another "Flintstone" would put the now-profitable companies on notice. No more substandard wages! We want back everything we gave up and we want our plants kept open. If there is insufficient demand for vehicles, why not use idle plants to supply the "green" economy? They could easily be retooled to build buses, wind turbines and solar panels.

A dramatic action like a sit-down requires preparation — logistical, legal and psychological. Why not start the process at the Convention, which will draw delegates from every local in the country?

"Flintstone" is also a hard, fine-grained quartz that sparks when struck. Now is the time — ignite the spark! □

‘Recovery’ falters

Mass unemployment remains; capitalism at an impasse

By Fred Goldstein

The sound of the stock market crashing on June 4, when the Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 324 points in one day, was the sound of Wall Street catching up to economic developments.

The realization is dawning on the financial gamblers and speculators that their hopes for a capitalist recovery are slipping away. The trillions of dollars in bailout funds and stimulus funds have been unable to pull the capitalist economy up enough to start a genuine recovery.

The market plunged over the release of the official government jobs numbers for May. The speculators had had their hopes raised by rumors that May would see a big jump in job creation in the capitalist economy — that is, in business-created jobs. But the government report showed that of the 431,000 new jobs created, 411,000 were from the government hiring people temporarily to work for eight weeks on the 2010 Census.

Private businesses hired a net total of only 20,000 workers in May. With 30 million workers unemployed and underemployed, this means that the capitalist economy basically stood still from the point of view of job creation.

It should be added that even with the few private jobs that were added, the disparity in employment between Black, Latino/a and white workers is actually getting worse. And the crisis of youth unemployment is still deepening.

Wall Street’s worry: profit creation

It hardly needs to be emphasized that Wall Street’s woes over the lack of job creation have nothing to do with concern for the workers. Even though these financial sharks live on speculative profits made from buying and selling financial instruments of one type or another, they know full well that the ultimate source of real profit is the exploitation of labor. The labor of the workers creates all the wealth that the corporations pay out in dividends and that the speculators gamble with.

To them, a failure of job creation is, in essence, a failure of profit creation. That is what worries them first and foremost. Of course, they are worried that expanding long-term mass unemployment could in the long run lead to social uprisings. But in the short run, the market went down on the realization that capitalist exploitation was slowing.

Even more telling about the overall crisis conditions battering the workers right now are the government statistics on the state of the recovery. What the capitalist pundits do not want to talk about is that the weak recovery had already showed signs of decline and instability before these jobs numbers came out.

Capitalist recovery faltered last quarter

The government’s Bureau of Economic Analysis compiles the numbers that are used as the official gauge of economic growth or decline. According to them, the overall decline of production that started in December 2007 ended in the third quarter of 2009, and the ensuing capitalist recovery has continued into the first quarter of 2010.

The bourgeoisie wants to emphasize that the recovery has continued for three quarters in a row. What they don’t want to discuss is that in this last quarter, that is, the third quarter of the recovery, there was a precipitous decline in the rate of growth of economic activity compared to the previous quarter.

The numbers, according to the BEA, are as follows: third quarter 2009, 2.2 percent growth; fourth quarter 2009, 5.5 percent growth; first quarter 2010, 2.3 percent growth — and this is now being revised down to 2.1 percent.

This is an unorthodox recovery, stimulated by capitalist government spending, which amounts to the printing of money. But even in this early stage of the recovery, it is already showing signs of weakness and instability. If the enormous already-existing problems of unemployment and budget cutbacks were not enough to set off alarm bells in the heads of leaders of the working class, these latest economic numbers should. These developments do not in any way correspond to a normal capitalist recovery.

Engels on normal capitalist recovery

In a normal capitalist recovery, growth in production and output feeds upon itself to produce a continuous expansion.

Frederick Engels, Karl Marx’s closest collaborator, gave the classic description of the capitalist boom-and-bust cycle in his work “Socialism, Utopian and Scientific,” published in 1880.

“As a matter of fact, since 1825, when the first general crisis broke out, the whole industrial and commercial world ... [is] thrown out of joint once every 10 years. Commerce is at a standstill, the markets are glutted, products accumulate, as multitudinous as they are unsalable, hard cash disappears, credit vanishes, factories are closed, the mass of the workers are in want of the means of subsistence, because they have produced too much of the means of subsistence; bankruptcy follows upon bankruptcy. ... The stagnation lasts for years; productive forces and products are wasted and destroyed wholesale, until the accumulated mass of commodities finally filters off ... until production and exchange gradually begin to move again. Little by little the pace quickens. It becomes a trot. The industrial trot breaks into a canter, the canter in turn grows into the headlong gallop of a perfect steeplechase of industry, commercial credit, and speculation which finally, after breakneck leaps, ends up where it began — in the ditch of crisis. And over and over again.”

It is the repetition of this boom-and-bust business cycle that in the past has driven capitalist production forward to achieve higher and higher levels over time. On the ruins of each crisis, the bourgeoisie built up bigger means of production. Giant firms, strong firms swallowed up smaller and weaker ones. Capital became more and more centralized and concentrated. Vast sums were invested in advancing technology in order to intensify exploitation and expand into larger markets.

This is how the capitalist recovery fed its own growth. It expanded investment, pulling workers into the work force to replace the destroyed or obsolete means of production. The older factories, machines and so on were obsolete not in the sense that they were no longer useful but in the sense that their use in production no longer yielded the higher rates of profit attainable with newer technology.

In the past, each crisis contained within it the seeds of a recovery. But today there is no sign of what Engels described: a slow-paced beginning breaking into a trot, then a canter and a full-scale gallop. The economy has not even gotten past a crawl before it is beginning to slow down already. This is because the recovery is not based on the normal capitalist process of expansion but upon the intervention of the capitalist state.

State financing can’t save capitalism

Thus, it is clear that the bailouts and stimulus spending cannot fuel a self-sustaining capitalist recovery — even the $10.5 trillion spent in the U.S. and the several trillion in Europe and Japan. The trillion-dollar bailout planned for southern Europe, even if the warring capitalist bandit states can actually carry out such a collective action, will not overcome the crisis of European capitalism, which cannot be separated from the crisis of U.S. or Japanese capitalism. This is a crisis of world capitalism.

On the one hand, world capitalism has been dependent in the latest crisis on the capitalist governments to keep it from collapsing. On the other hand, even massive capitalist state financing cannot create a capitalist recovery. Moreover, the trend is going in the opposite direction. In the United States, for example, tens of thousands of jobs at all levels of government have already been eliminated due to the budget crisis, which is a product of the overall capitalist crisis. And this is just the beginning. Unless there is a concerted struggle by the workers, the huge budget-cutting plans that are now in the works, especially on the state and local level, will greatly increase unemployment, more than offsetting any state intervention to create jobs.

All this confirms the Marxist analysis of the present crisis showing that capitalism has reached an impasse. Historic overproduction, based upon three decades of advancing technology, shedding labor and lowering wages around the world, has created a capitalist future of stagnation, mass unemployment and slow growth at best. The inevitable collapse of the system is now on the historical agenda once again.

The repetitive paroxysms of crises within the financial system are a reflection of capitalism having reached a qualitative turning point — the point at which it cannot start itself up again by economic means alone.

Its decades of expanding productivity have created a productive system that has outgrown the world markets it created. In a word, capitalism has outgrown the planet and must be destroyed and replaced by socialism if the people of the planet are to survive. Any temporary stabilization should not obscure this historical fact.

The writer is author of the book “Low-Wage Capitalism,” a Marxist analysis of globalization and its effects on the U.S. working class. He has also written numerous articles and spoken on the present economic crisis. For further information visit www.lowwagecapitalism.com.

CD party backs political prisoner Tarek Mehanna

By Easton Smith
Brooklyn, N.Y.

“Separate and unequal, spent years under federal surveillance for uplifting his people, when the pigs got fed-up the brother got set-up,” Hasan Salaam rapped on May 28 during a CD-release benefit for political prisoner Tarek Mehanna. Another performer featured on the album, Jen Waller, sang, “I never hurt nobody, I never broke no laws, but if you struggle for freedom, better hope you don’t get caught.”

Rebel Diaz sang, “Cause if I spend my life fighting for what’s right, I expect to be convicted in a court full of lies.” These revolutionary artists’ lyrics rang especially true that night, as the audience thought of Mehanna.

Mehanna was arrested last Oct. 21 and officially charged with aiding terrorists abroad and planning attacks domestically. However, no credible evidence supports these claims; in fact, Mehanna has long been a proponent of peace.

A pharmacist from suburban Boston who also teaches elementary school, Mehanna is seen as a leader in the Boston Muslim community. The FBI’s charges come after years of police harassment against the entire Muslim community.

Mehanna was arrested after he continually resisted FBI coercion to act as a police informant in his own community. Denied bail and facing life in prison, he is currently being held in 23-hour solitary confinement in Plymouth, Mass.

The two-disc set, “Silence Broken,” was produced by Movement in Motion and the Tarek Mehanna Support Committee to bring attention to Mehanna’s political imprisonment and the FBI’s war on the Muslim community.

The release party for the second disc of “Silence Broken” included performances by many important movement artists, such as Spiritchild of Mental Notes, Rebel Diaz, Nana Soul and folk-punk singer Evan Greer. It also featured upcoming artists like Jen Waller and the R.E.A.L. Music Lovers.

Between the audience and the artists, the atmosphere was one of both celebration for the revolutionary gathering and somber thoughts for Mehanna. From the R.E.A.L. Music Lovers’ opening songs, until the late night performances by Hasan Salaam and Majesty, the performers kept Mehanna in mind by informing the audience about his case, talking about police brutality and surveillance, and honoring his heroic refusal to turn against his own community.

The event was more than just a CD-release party or a benefit; it was a coming together of creative minds with a goal to raise awareness about political prisoners and the attacks on Muslim communities. Everyone present, from the audience to the performers, was aware of the powerful energy that was created through unity and song to resist the racist, capitalist system that incarcerated Mehanna. □

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Protests across U.S. condemn I

By Betsey Piette

The worldwide storm of protests that followed Israel's murderous attack against the Gaza Freedom Flotilla continued the week following the May 31 predawn assault, an atrocity that resulted in the death of at least nine activists and injury to scores more who were attempting to deliver 10,000 tons of humanitarian aid to Gaza.

Protesters in dozens of cities — perhaps as many as a hundred — across the U.S. are voicing a common demand for an end to the U.S.-backed Israeli blockade of Gaza and an end to U.S. funding of Israel's occupation of Palestine. Demonstrations also took place in cities across Canada, and major protests occurred on June 4 throughout the Middle East and on June 5 across Europe, including as many as 20,000 people in London.

On a worldwide scale larger numbers of people than ever before are involved both in planning new attempts to break Israel's blockade of Gaza and in the movement to boycott, divest or win sanctions against Israel.

Over 40 protesters gathered in downtown **TACOMA, WASH.,** on May 31 to condemn the Israeli raid on the humanitarian aid flotilla. The emergency protest had been organized through a series of e-mails and phone calls earlier in the day. It included Jewish activists and members of United for Peace of Pierce County, People for Peace, Justice and Healing and Women in Black.

Over 200 people, largely from Palestinian and Arab communities, demonstrated on June 1 in front of the Israeli Consulate in **ATLANTA** as part of a protest organized by the Movement to End Israeli Apartheid-Georgia. There was significant participation by Jewish activists opposed to Israeli aggression. Joe Beasley, director of Rainbow/Push, attended as well as representatives of faith organizations.

In **CLEVELAND** 60 people including Arab youth protested outside the office of Sen. Sherrod Brown (Dem.) and then marched a few blocks to the office of Sen. George Voinovich (Rep.) in a June 1 action sponsored by the Middle East Peace Forum. The two-hour protest received many honks of support from passing motorists.

On June 2 the **JERSEY CITY** Peace Movement held a very successful, emergency vigil and rally outside Congressman Steve Rothman's (Dem.) Jersey City, N.J., office. Participants included N.J. Action 21's Narciso Castillo, recent City Council candidate Adela Rohena and JCPM president Erik-Anders Nilsson along with other members of his organization.

After the action at Rothman's office the protesters marched through Journal Square with large posters in solidarity with Gaza.

On May 31, June 1 and June 4 there were protests in **NEW YORK**, with 1,000 people on the last date marching from the Times Square area to the Israeli U.N. Mission on the East Side. Al-Awda, the International Action Center and many other organizations participated, along with a contingent from the Turkish community carrying their country's flags.

In **RICHMOND, VA.**, more than 75 people protested June 1 and called on the United Nations to indict Israeli leaders for mass murder and violation of international law. They also demanded an immediate end to the annual $3 billion U.S. subsidy to Israel and called on Gov. Bob McDonnell to dissolve the Virginia-Israel Advisory Board, the state's only agency formed to promote trade with a specific foreign country. Participants included Arab Americans, Black activists, anarchists and representatives of local peace organizations.

More than 3,000 people protested outside the Israeli Consulate in **CHICAGO** on June 1. The diverse crowd included Arabs, African Americans and Latinos/as demanding an end to the siege of Gaza and an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands.

Awad Hamdan of American Muslims for Palestine said, "We demand that Israel stop its deadly actions and stop blaming the civilians for their deaths. This was Israel's fault." Another speaker compared Arizona to Gaza, noting that Arizona's new anti-immigrant law is like Israeli apartheid that oppresses Palestinians. The Palestine Solidarity Group in Chicago has launched a campaign to pressure the city to sever its ties with Israel.

A second protest on June 2 targeted Israel's inclusion in the Sister City program's 50th anniversary banquet dinner attended by representatives of more then 70 governments. Hamdan said, "We've been urging Chicago for years to drop the sister city of Petach Tikva, which was the first 'Jewish-only' settlement in Palestine. They haven't listened, and we will continue to protest." Demonstrators also demanded that Israel free Ameer Makhoul, a Palestinian grassroots activist kidnapped from his home in May and tortured at Petach Tikva.

On June 1 around 350 people attended a rally outside the Israeli Consulate in **PHILADELPHIA** and then marched down all three lanes of Market Street to City Hall. The march ended with a rally outside the offices of the Philadelphia Inquirer, where demonstrators called on the newspaper to end its one-sided coverage in favor of the Israeli settler state.

A number of the participants were Palestinian, mostly youth, including a dynamic group of high school students who led the march and the chants. At one point a small group of Zionists attempted to stop the march, but protesters pushed right through them.

The protest was called by the Philly International Action Center and endorsed by Jewish Voices for Peace, Brandywine Peace Community, Philly Against War, Delaware

Israel's atomic ties to apartheid South Africa documented

By G. Dunkel

To write a history of the political, military and economic alliance between Israel and apartheid South Africa, which began in earnest with the Yom Kippur War of 1973 and lasted until the collapse of the apartheid state in 1994, the author of "The Unspoken Alliance," Sasha Polakow-Suransky, spent six years interviewing more than 60 people in South Africa, Israel and Washington.

The author also had access to 7,000 pages of previously classified South African archives, detailing extensive and secret negotiations between top leaders in Israel and apartheid South Africa. The most significant secret uncovered appears to be that South African Defense Minister P.W. Botha asked Israeli Defense Minister Shimon Peres for nuclear warheads in 1975. Peres, now Israel's president, responded by offering warheads "in three sizes."

The general outlines of the military and political cooperation between apartheid South Africa and Israel have been known for a long time. What is new here are the details — the who, what, when and where, based on both extensive documentary evidence and interviews with participants.

The Peres statement is admittedly ambiguous on its face. Polakow-Suransky and the Guardian newspaper of Great Britain on May 24 argue, however, that the very ambiguity of the formulation and its context — for example, the agreement stipulated that it was to be kept secret and its existence would be denied — and other agreements between Israel and apartheid South Africa on the development of missiles lead to the conclusion that one of the three sizes was "nuclear."

Peres' office quickly and firmly issued a denial on May 25, carefully maintaining Israel's position of neither denying nor affirming its possession of nuclear weapons. Mordechai Vanunu, a technician at Israel's Dimona facility, revealed in 1986 that Israel possessed 180 to 200 nuclear warheads. The government's policy of deliberate ambiguity didn't keep the Israeli courts from sentencing Vanunu to 18 years for treason and espionage.

Polakow-Suransky is not just a bright young PhD who was lucky or fortunate enough to parlay his family connections in South Africa and Israel to obtain financing from the Rhodes Trust and the Harry S. Truman Foundation. He is a senior editor at Foreign Affairs, the monthly publication of the Council on Foreign Relations. The CFR was founded in 1921 with Rockefeller money and ever since has been a highly influential think-tank presenting their interests and the interests of big oil and high finance. David Rockefeller, the patriarch of the family, joined the board of the CFR in 1949 and is currently its chair.

Given this connection to one of the major players in U.S. big oil, it is particularly interesting to see how Polakow-Suransky answers two charges: that Zionism is racism and that Israel has adopted an apartheid policy towards the Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank, lands it has oc-

Continued on page 10

More fallout fr

Continued from page 1

arrest of the activists aboard the ship to further slander the Turkish Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH), organizers of the flotilla along with the Free Gaza Movement, and the activists slain aboard the Mavi Marmara. "We saw today the difference between a ship of peace activists ... [and] a ship of hate organized by violent Turkish terror extremists," Netanyahu claimed.

In response, the Free Gaza Movement replied: "The only hate evidenced on board all six boats on Monday morning came from the Israeli attackers. ... Therefore, we are putting Mr. Netanyahu on notice that we are returning in the next couple of months with another flotilla, that his actions and the actions of his soldiers have energized thousands of people who have stepped forward with offers to help and participate on the next voyage."

Indeed, other aid caravans are being organized to support Gaza, including ships from Lebanon and a caravan of Jewish people from Germany. Turkey Prime Min-

EW YORK

OTTO

WW PHOTO: ALAN ROTH

sraeli massacre

Valley Vietnam Vets, Socialist Action and others. Several family members of the Fort Dix Five who held a rally earlier in the day attended.

Around 500 people, including many high school and college students from the Arab-American community, rallied outside the city hall in **DEARBORN, MICH.**, on June 1 in a protest called by the Congress of Arab American Organizations. The protesters challenged President Barack Obama's policy of continued support for Israel's occupation of Palestine as well as the spending of billions of dollars for an unjustifiable war on Afghanistan. The following day the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice and other organizations held a protest in downtown **DETROIT** outside the federal building.

Dozens of protesters gathered in downtown **INDIANAPOLIS** on June 2, holding signs and waving Palestinian and Turkish flags. Many held candles to mourn the nine activists killed onboard the flotilla.

Abraham Alfaran, who has family in Gaza, stated, "It brings tears to my eyes to see the children die and to see the people who are trying to feed the unfed, the people that are under siege, lose their lives." Jessica Neisley, who spent three months in Gaza in 2004 with the International Solidarity Movement, also spoke.

On June 5 over a thousand protesters rallied and marched in downtown **SAN FRANCISCO.** The demonstration was organized and endorsed by a broad coalition of anti-war, labor, community, Palestinian and solidarity organizations.

Cristina Gutierrez, speaking for the local San Francisco immigrant rights group Barrios Unidos, expressed her community's solidarity with the Palestinian people. "As an immigrant, I walk hand in hand with the Palestinians," Gutierrez stated.

Husam Zakharia, a young Palestinian activist, made the connection between the reactionary forces supporting the anti-immigrant law SB 1070 in Arizona and the leaders of Israel who attacked the flotilla. "The same forces that are dragging immigrants out of their communities at home are killing the people of Palestine," he said.

Jack Heymann, a labor activist and Executive Board member of Local 10, International Longshore Workers Union, brought solidarity greetings from his union. He noted that the longshore workers have a rich history of fighting against repression. In the U.S., ILWU locals refused to load cargo bound for South Africa to protest apartheid. "In June 2009, dockworkers in Durban, South Africa, refused to load an Israeli ship to protest the massacre of 1,500 Palestinians in Gaza," Heyman stated.

Chanting, "Occupation is a crime from Iraq to Palestine!" the demonstration marched up Market Street and ended at the Civic Center.

Gloria Rubac, Bev Hiestand, Martha Grevatt, Dianne Mathiowetz, Phil Wilayto, Kris Hamel, Judy Greenspan and others contributed to this article.

WORKERS WORLD PARTY STATEMENT

ISRAELI TERROR MUST NOT PASS!

End the siege of Gaza Break the blockade
Boycott the apartheid settler state
Stop Washington's imperialist strategic alliance with Israel
LONG LIVE PALESTINE!

Workers World Party links arms with the heroic members of the Freedom Flotilla who risked their lives trying to break Israel's genocidal siege of Gaza. We mourn for those who were cut down by the racist settler state of Israel while on a humanitarian mission, and we will redouble our militant support for the movement to end the blockade.

Israel now adds piracy and murder on the high seas to its long list of crimes against the Palestinian people and their supporters. It is not known yet whether the decision to carry out this foul deed came only from Israeli commanders or whether its imperialist sponsors, especially Washington and London, were also involved and informed.

Either way, such conduct by a small country would be impossible without the undeniable support and collusion of these imperialist powers over decades. Israel has again and again launched terror attacks on the Palestinians and on neighboring countries like Lebanon. It carried out a ruthless military campaign just 16 months ago against the civilian population of Gaza, bombing and burning to death more than 1,400 Palestinians.

Now these same imperialists are again trying to put out the fires of resistance sparked by Israel's crimes. As they have done before, with each act of Israeli terror, the U.S. and Britain in particular block any meaningful international condemnation of such outrageous acts at a time when the people of the world are demanding retribution.

It has never been clearer than now why Israel gets away with its crimes: It is a ruthless instrument of imperialism that was deliberately planted in the Middle East to counter the long and growing struggle of the peoples of the region to finally free their resources from Western exploitation and regain their sovereignty.

Israel is a racist settler state that has much in common with the apartheid regime in South Africa. In fact, documents have just been revealed showing Israel agreed to supply the apartheid regime with nuclear war-making capability — a deal that was thwarted when the African people, supported by a world anti-apartheid movement, succeeded in bringing down the racists.

That's what is needed now — a worldwide movement to pull down the racist settler state in Israel. It is an essential and a key element in the growing struggle of the workers and oppressed peoples of the world to get the billionaires off their backs and win economic and social justice. □

om Israeli massacre: Global solidarity with Palestine

ister Recep Tayyip Erdogan is considering participating in a flotilla.

Protests continue

International protest has continued, with a persistent demand to end the blockade of Gaza. The government of Nicaragua suspended diplomatic relations with Israel on June 1, and on June 3 South Africa recalled its ambassador to Israel.

Many in the U.S. Black community have shown their solidarity with Palestine. The front page of the June 3 Amsterdam News — the main paper of the Black community in Harlem, New York — declared "FREE PALESTINE!" New York City Councilperson Charles Barron is quoted at a rally, "If [the Israelis] were Somalis protecting their maritime waters from pollution, they would be considered pirates."

In an Electronic Intifada article, poet and novelist Alice Walker wrote: "Rosa Parks sat down in the front of the bus. Martin Luther King followed her act of courage with many of his own. ... It is time for us, en masse, to show up in front of our conscience." Both Barron and Walker had participated in previous caravans to Gaza.

Labor unions have joined in the condemnation. The Swedish Port Workers Union announced their own blockade, of Israeli ships and cargo to and from Israel, from June 15 through June 24. The union urged other unions to take similar initiatives "until the Palestinian people's rights have been satisfied in general and in particular the blockade of Gaza lifted." (transportworkers.org) U.S. Labor Against the War also issued a statement.

Tipping point?

While Israel is a client state of the U.S., receiving billions in U.S. aid, the two governments don't always see eye to eye in terms of priorities or tactics. Washington has expressed unhappiness when Israel's brutal, murderous tactics cause problems for U.S. imperialist interests.

A June 4 New York Times article entitled "Washington asks: what to do about Israel?" describes some of the problems the U.S. faces in the Middle East — where U.S. imperialism is already hated for the wars on Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as for support of Israel — as a result of the massacre. The Obama administration admits that it had been in discussion with Israel about the flotilla before the attack, claiming that it had warned Israel to use "caution and restraint." (Washington Post, June 3)

According to the Washington Post, Israel is now considering, "in response to U.S. demands," allowing more goods into Gaza and allowing ships to sail there after inspecting their contents. (June 6) As a cruel form of collective punishment, Israel prevents Gaza residents from importing everything from concrete — which has kept them from rebuilding the homes and infrastructure destroyed by Israeli bombings — to quality-of-life goods such as toys, fabrics, chocolate, notebooks, French fries and dried fruit.

Yet when the U.N. Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on June 2 that condemned the attack, called upon Israel to "lift the siege on occupied Gaza and other occupied Territories," and authorized an independent, international fact-finding mission, the U.S. was one of three countries to vote against it. The Israeli ambassador to the U.S., Michael Oren, has said that dialogue between the two countries would not involve an end to the blockade. (CNN, June 3)

However, this newest Israeli violence — and the thunderous denunciations around the world — may have raised the stakes to what many see as a tipping point.

The flotilla massacre has heightened awareness of and resistance to Israel's brutality against the Palestinian people throughout the region, who remain second-class citizens under an apartheid system. Palestinian homes are bulldozed while thousands of Palestinian political prisoners — both adults and children — are tortured in Israeli prisons. In retaliation for the 2007 electoral victory of Palestinian political party Hamas, Israel has turned Gaza into a concentration camp.

Many hope and believe that the attack on the Mavi Marmara and the courage of those ready for new flotillas will inspire a coalescing of the movement to free Palestine, reminiscent of the movement that helped defeat apartheid in South Africa. □

The deficit, budget cuts & the Pentagon budget

By Sara Flounders

The money the U.S. government will spend this year on the Pentagon and its wars, past and present, is approaching the total of the budgets of all 50 U.S. states combined.

Even as funding for education, health care, parks and recreation, senior centers, environmental protection, and all the other vital services provided by federal, state and local governments is being cut, the Pentagon budget is continuing to grow.

In the current fiscal year (FY2011), the budget for the Department of Defense, including what is to be spent on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, comes to $876 billion — an increase of 8 percent over last year.

However, this is only part of the enormous cost of U.S. militarism. Add to that the $522 billion being spent this year to cover the cost of past wars, including veterans' benefits and interest on the debts incurred to pay for war, and the total amount becomes $1.39 trillion. (War Resisters League pie chart)

The money that all 50 state governments spend for everything they do is expected to add up to $1.43 trillion this year. (usgovernmentspending.com) It may not get that high. State budgets are being drastically shrunk as federal monies and tax revenues dry up; new cuts are being announced every week.

Increasingly the billions wasted on war are aggravating the deteriorating conditions for tens of millions of workers and their families. It is up to the most determined political activists to connect the dots and make the connections widely known.

When protesters at the closing of a hospital, school or library chant: "Health care, not war!" "Education, not war!" "Jobs, not war!" or "Feed the people, not the Pentagon!" these are more than just slogans. They reflect the reality of every state and city facing an unsolvable budget crisis and cuts at a time when the only authorized funding increases are for the military budget and repression at home.

The script is the same everywhere. Workers are told that due to a sharp decline in tax revenue, there is no money for state, county and city projects. What isn't said is that the decline in taxes is caused by a capitalist economic crisis, where the bosses deal with the collapse of the markets by throwing workers out of their jobs.

With a decline of 10 percent in revenue from state and local taxes, every governor, mayor and city council is claiming that it is impossible to solve their budget gaps except by attacking the living standards of working people and the poor. Union contracts are being shredded and public workers illegally furloughed in total violation of these legal documents.

Hospitals, schools, libraries, recreation centers, after-school programs and health clinics are forced to close or dramatically cut their staffs, hours and programs for lack of funding, not for lack of need. But there are no moves to freeze interest payments on tax-exempt bonds held by banks and multimillionaires.

Of course, a dramatic increase in funds from the federal government could immediately ease this crisis that the working class is facing. A massive federal jobs program and an emergency moratorium on housing foreclosures and evictions are needed.

The federal government has instead committed $10.5 trillion to bailing out the banks. And on Feb. 1 President Barack Obama announced that this year's federal budget contained a three-year hard freeze on all nonmilitary discretionary funding.

The announcement drew scant media attention at the time. But the impact is being felt now and the pain of the drastic freeze will be increasingly felt. Because of inflation, the three-year freeze is actually an annual and cumulative cut in funds to states and cities.

Social programs will face further cuts than just those caused by inflation because almost half of military spending is hidden in discretionary funding. President Obama's announcement made it clear that there would be no freeze in military funding. Protected multibillion-dollar programs include foreign arms sales, nuclear weapons maintenance and policy-driven foreign assistance programs.

WW PHOTO: BRYAN PFEIFER

Anti-war movement says: 'Money for cities, not for war.'

Capitalism and militarism

This budget freeze, announced as a measure to rein in the deficit, will supposedly save $250 billion over 10 years. That is less than 3 percent of the $9 trillion that is projected to be added to the national debt during this period.

Despite all the promises and all the hype, this freeze in discretionary funding confirms that there are no plans to create millions of jobs, halt millions of scheduled foreclosures or reconstruct the deteriorating infrastructure.

The only planned increases are in the trillions of dollars for high-tech weapons systems that generate superprofits for the giant military corporations. The military budget is projected to grow by at least 5 percent a year. There was no congressional or corporate media opposition to this multibillion-dollar deficit buster.

The $250 billion saved over 10 years in the freeze of discretionary funding will be quickly squandered. The Pentagon plans to spend $240 billion on 2,400 new Joint Strike Fighter planes, at $100 million a plane.

And it will be gobbled up in one year in military cost overruns. President Obama on signing the 2010 Pentagon budget said, "The Government Accountability Office, the GAO, has looked into 96 major defense projects from the last year, and found cost overruns that totaled $296 billion." (whitehouse.gov, Oct. 28)

A big chunk of every state and city budget is interest payments to banks and bondholders for past projects. These interest payments must be made on time and in full or the bankers threaten their credit rating and all future loans, creating a worse financial crisis.

In the face of this crisis for the working class, it is essential that Marxists explain in all of their literature and campaigns some basic facts of capitalism. The workers create all the fabulous wealth of the capitalist system. The economic crisis is not caused by giving the workers too much. It is caused by the unplanned overproduction of goods that are too numerous to be sold at a profit by the capitalist owners. Even spending trillions of dollars on military expenditures is no longer enough to sop up this overproduction.

The federal budget deficit is caused by the hundreds of billions handed out annually over decades to the military corporations and the trillions of dollars handed to the banks to guarantee their profits. The debt also ballooned when the government drastically cut taxes on the rich.

Another part of federal, state and city budgets that the capitalist decision makers will not cut is expenses for police, prisons and courts. This repressive role of the capitalist state functions at every level, from 1,000 military bases around the world to police and cameras on every corner. It is an indispensable part of protecting profits, not human lives.

Federal budget freeze

It is essential for political activists to look closely at what drastic cuts are being projected to begin to plan counteroffensives with the workers who will be most directly impacted.

The federal budget freeze will cause immediate and continuing reductions in agencies such as Health and Human Services, which funds low-income preschool Head Start programs; aid to pregnant women, infants and seniors; food and drug safety; and disease prevention. It will impact Housing and Urban Development, which provides funds for affordable housing, antipoverty programs and infrastructure development. These two departments, along with transportation, agriculture and energy, receive a combined $250 billion in federal funding.

A freeze in the Department of Agriculture immediately impacts food stamp programs and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Department of Transportation will have even fewer funds for infrastructure maintenance of bridges, roads, airports, pipelines and hazardous waste systems.

Also targeted by the federal funds freeze are the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Parks Service, the National Science Foundation and the Army Corps of Engineers flood control programs.

The Pentagon budget is not only an enormous waste of the resources of the planet. It also funds the slaughter of peoples struggling to control their own destiny and its doomsday weapons systems pollute the whole environment.

Military expenditures cannot save the capitalist system. But they can ruin millions of lives. □

CHINA AND MEXICO

Autoworkers fight back

By Martha Grevatt

Two strikes of autoworkers, one in China and one in Mexico, have ended with the workers making gains.

After 400 workers struck a plant of auto parts supplier Johnson Controls in Puebla, Mexico — drawing international support — the company on May 29 agreed to recognize the National Union of Mine and Metal Workers (SNTMMSRM). Ties to the "Protection Contract Union" — a company union that had signed a secret, sweetheart agreement without workers' knowledge or consent — were severed. Contracts with bona fide, independent unions are the exception rather than the rule, making this a tremendous win.

Some 70 thugs had gone to the factory on May 26 to intimidate the workers, who also had been threatened with discharge if they did not end their affiliation with the SNTMMSRM. In a response, labor organized an international call-in campaign targeting the company. Members of the United Auto Workers, AFL-CIO; Maquiladora Solidarity Network and the International Metalworkers Federation demanded the company recognize the union of the workers' choosing.

A few days later, a contract was signed promising no reprisals for striking, a $100 bonus and direct hiring of contract workers.

In Foshan, China, workers returned to work June 2 after a two-week strike at the Honda transmission plant there. They were angry over the failure of wages to keep up with prices, as well as the widening gap between workers and the business elite.

The strike had crippled Honda's production throughout China. Honda had offered workers a 24 percent raise. However, the strike won raises of 34 percent and more. Lower-paid college interns won raises of 70 percent. This brought everyone's pay up to around $300 per month.

"It's a victory for the workers," a Honda employee told the New York Times. (June 4)

The strike settlement is a victory for all workers in China. After the strike ended, electronics giant Foxconn raised wages 33 percent. Foxconn, which has 800,000 Chinese employees and supplies Apple and other major computer firms, has had a number of worker suicides recently tied to low wages and bad working conditions. Apparently, this was less of a concern to that company than a possible strike.

Members of the United Auto Workers, holding their convention in Detroit in early June, should celebrate the victories of their counterparts in Asia and Latin America — and think about reviving their own militant traditions.

The writer has been an autoworker for 22 years.

S. Korean press reported

Accident, not N. Korean sub, sunk Chenoan

By Deirdre Griswold

The hawkish regime of South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, with Washington's backing, has moved to take the case of the Cheonan warship disaster to the U.N. Security Council, charging that the ship was sunk by a submarine from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

This move comes more than two months after the ship went down on March 26 and just after elections in South Korea in which Lee's right-wing party, the Grand National Party, had tried to use a scare campaign around the sinking of the ship to bolster its flagging support.

The DPRK has vehemently denied any role in the sinking. Its request to send a team to the south to inspect the "evidence" the Lee government claims to possess has been rejected.

The imperialist media, in a replay of their subservient role to the Bush administration's charges that Iraq possessed "weapons of mass destruction" justifying an invasion of that country, have treated the charges against the DPRK as an open-and-shut case.

But an extensive article by an independent Canadian journalist, Stephen Gowans, shows that even the South Korean military and intelligence authorities said nothing of the sort for weeks after the ship went down. (See gowans.wordpress.com.)

Testifying before a parliamentary committee in early April, Won See-hoon, director of South Korea's National Intelligence, said there was no evidence linking the DPRK to the disaster.

South Korean Minister of Defense Kim Tae-young pointed out that the Cheonan's crew had not detected a torpedo. Lee Ki-sik, head of the marine operations office at the South Korean joint chiefs of staff, said, "No North Korean warships have been detected ... [in] the waters where the accident took place."

An accident. No submarines. No torpedoes.

However, the Lee regime pressed ahead with its charges, getting full support from U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and the Obama administration.

It appointed what it called an "international investigating team," which turned out to be basically the U.S. and South Korea, to come up with the conclusion that a minisubmarine from the north had somehow sneaked into the heavily defended, shallow waters around Baengnyeong Island and sunk the ship.

What hasn't been mentioned in the Western media is that Shin Sang-cheol, one of the members of the taskforce that investigated the sinking of the Cheonan, was replaced for "arousing public mistrust in the probe." Shin had "repeatedly claimed that the sinking was just an accident, and that the South had tampered with evidence to blame the North." ("Probe member summoned on false rumor allegations," JoongAng Daily, May 29)

And when Park Sun-won, the secretary for national security under former South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun, accused the Lee administration of concealing information about the sinking, he too was investigated by the present regime for "spreading false rumors."

Gowans' article documents all these developments with quotes from the South Korean press, including the Korea Herald, Korea Times, Choson Ilbo, Hankyoreh and JoongAng Daily.

The attempt by the Lee regime to turn this naval disaster into a propaganda coup for its party appears to have failed. The party lost more local offices than it gained, according to the latest news reports.

The days when politicians linked to U.S. imperialism's global ambitions could force their agendas down the people's throats appear to be waning. In Japan, once the colonial ruler over all of Korea, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama had to resign at the beginning of June after huge demonstrations over his betrayal of election promises to get rid of a U.S. military base in Okinawa that had been a thorn in the side of the people there.

In this day of the Internet, the world no longer need be held hostage by the giant corporate news media. The lies these organs of big business have spread to justify wars, going back to the cynical role of the Hearst papers in promoting U.S. imperialism's bloody conquest of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines in 1898, can be quickly dispelled. Hopefully, this will help the people of the U.S. gain a truer picture of Korea, its sufferings under first Japanese and then U.S. domination, and the need for solidarity with the Korean people's desire for reunification and an end to U.S. occupation of the south.

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Japanese gov't shaken as

Huge protests demand U.S. leave Okinawa air base

By Sharon Danann

Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama had promised before taking office last year that he would make the Pentagon close a U.S. Marine base on Okinawa called the Futenma Air Station. It got him a lot of votes, especially in Okinawa, a group of islands occupied by the U.S. after World War II but "reverted" to Japan in 1972.

Once Hatoyama was elected, however, the U.S. government put heavy pressure on him to go back on his pledge to the Japanese people. Hatoyama finally caved in April and agreed to keep the Futenma base.

That's when all hell broke loose. Huge demonstrations rocked Okinawa and other parts of Japan. On June 2, after his popularity plummeted and his coalition government fell apart, Hatoyama resigned his post, bowing to the greater pressure, the power of the people.

When Hatoyama's Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) swept the Liberal Democratic Party out of office after a 50-year reign, it was partly due to his Okinawa Vision 2008, which called for the complete removal of Futenma, not just moving it away from the heavily populated city of Ginowan.

Futenma had been fiercely opposed by the people, especially after the rape of a 12-year-old Okinawan girl by three U.S. servicemen in 1995. The U.S. had then agreed to turn over Futenma in five to seven years. Urgency was added in 2004 when a Marine helicopter crashed into Okinawa International University in Ginowan. Two years later the U.S. agreed to eventually relocate the base to a less populated area. But the people kept up their struggle to get rid of the base altogether.

When Okinawans this year sensed that Hatoyama might double-cross them, they launched two months of protests. On April 6-9, some 150 Okinawans staged a sit-in at the Japanese Diet (parliament) building, along with their legislators.

On April 25 crowds of people wearing yellow — the color of warning — packed an athletic field in Yomitan, Okinawa. High school student Shikiya Narumi spoke of traditional Okinawan ideals that "valued human ties more than anything else." A roar of approval went up when she declared, "Bases are not necessary in Okinawa." (Visit http://tinyurl.com/247twc2 to see YouTube excerpts of this rally.)

In addition to the 93,700 at this rally, another 3,000 were demonstrating on the neighboring island of Miyako. Together, the two protests were attended by almost 7 percent of all the people in Okinawa.

On May 16, despite heavy wind and rain, 17,000 Okinawans formed a human chain surrounding the 8-mile perimeter of Futenma. This was the fifth time a human chain demonstration around the base had been organized. With leadership from the cities most affected and from peace organizations, the event was timed to coincide with the 38th anniversary of "reversion."

In other parts of Japan, moves to expand U.S military operations were also met with angry protest. On May 8, 5,000 people rallied on the small island of Tokunoshima in Kagoshima Prefecture — nearly one-fifth of the population — to oppose the U.S. military relocating some of its functions there from Okinawa.

On May 23, 5,000 residents of Iwakuni, almost 1,000 miles southwest of Tokyo, turned out in the rain to protest the addition of a runway to the U.S. Marine base there. Seventeen-year-old Mizuho Okada told the protesters that the high school students frequently cannot hear their teachers due to noise from aircraft.

Prior to 1972, Okinawans had neither U.S. nor Japanese passports when Okinawa was a U.S. military colony. Reversion officially transformed Okinawa into a prefecture of Japan, but the U.S. military retains control over what takes place on the bases and in the airspace.

Tens of thousands of Okinawans rallied Nov. 10 against the U.S. military base in Ginowan, Okinawa.

Okinawa makes up less than 1 percent of Japan's land mass. However, 75 percent of Japanese land used exclusively by the U.S. military is in Okinawa. In fiscal 2005, more than half of the crimes and accidents linked to members of the U.S. military in Japan took place in Okinawa.

Prime Minister Hatoyama took advantage of a major U.S. scare campaign against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to justify caving in to the demands of the Obama administration and return to the 2006 plan to relocate Futenma rather than abolish it entirely, as he had promised.

When Mizuho Fukushima, head of the Social Democratic Party, a coalition partner with DPJ, opposed the plan, Hatoyama dismissed her from her position as minister for consumer affairs and gender equality.

Fukushima had been adamant that Futenma should be moved off Okinawa and that the SDP could not agree to relocating the base to Okinawa's coast. She stated, "It tramples on the feelings of the people of Okinawa and breaks a promise." Senior Vice Transport Minister Kiyomi Tsujimoto, another SDP legislator, resigned her position, and the SDP left the coalition to protest the relocation of Futenma.

On May 28 when the plan was announced ignoring Okinawa's expressed concerns, emergency demonstrations took place at Nago City Hall and Okinawa Prefectural offices. A 70-year-old farmer spoke for other residents when he said, "We are boiling with rage like magma."

The writer was a civilian activist with the anti-war G.I. movement in Okinawa from 1971 to 1973. Material for this article came from Mainichi Daily News, earthtimes.org, the L.A. Times, Xinhua and China Daily.

WORKERS WORLD editorial

Punishing the truth

Truth is having an especially hard time in the imperialist world these last few weeks. You can't get any from the top dogs at BP. Not a word of truth comes out of Tel Aviv. And when anyone actually tells the truth, they get in trouble for it.

German President Horst Köhler had to resign after he told the truth about German troops being in Afghanistan to protect German economic interests. He didn't add "imperialist," which would have made it even more truthful, but that was enough to force his resignation.

Now, senior White House correspondent Helen Thomas has to pay for asking truthful questions at the presidential press briefings. Trapped with a bunch of corporate media hacks who kissed the feet of whoever was in power — the more right-wing, the more kisses — Thomas at least asked some hard questions about the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan. And she got fed up over the U.S.-Israeli treatment of the people in Gaza.

Considering that rightist Tea-Party types get away with vicious, racist lies and sometimes with threatening to assassinate the president, one can only conclude that the ruling class intended to get rid of Thomas at the first opening. She deserves better, especially from her peers, but they seem to resent her having more courage in one pinky than they possess in their entire coddled bodies.

There's another purveyor of truth who appears to be in trouble with the authorities. If the report in Wired magazine is accurate, the Army has found the GI who leaked the video of a helicopter crew shooting Iraqis a few months ago. According to their story, Spc. Bradley Manning leaked that and videos of Pentagon crimes in Afghanistan, and even allegedly leaked 260,000 classified U.S. diplomatic cables that he described as exposing "almost criminal political back dealings."

Apparently Manning is being held on a base in Kuwait for telling the truth. While we don't know the facts about his actions, we do know that whoever exposed Pentagon war crimes in Iraq is a real war hero and deserves the support of the anti-war movement. And we know that two soldiers in the helicopter company have already apologized to the Iraqis for committing those crimes.

We also know that Thomas asked the kinds of questions that are forbidden among her peers in the world of corporate journalism and was forced to resign.

It's a bad season for truth, but at Workers World, we'll stick to it. □

Hunger strike for legalization

WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

June 8 was the eighth day of a hunger strike being conducted by immigrant youth to demand passage of the DREAM Act, a piece of legislation that would offer legalization to undocumented youth who meet certain criteria. The 10 undocumented youth began their hunger strike on June 1 in New York City, where they are demanding a meeting with Sen. Charles Schumer, who has pushed for more militarization of the border.

On June 3, staff members from Schumer's office approached the hunger strikers and offered a meeting with Schumer on June 18 — 15 days later! The youth, who are putting their lives on the line, held a news conference June 8 to demand a meeting by the end of the week. The photo shows hunger strikers as they begin the strike in front of Schumer's office.

— LeiLani Dowell

With fatal beating of Mexican

Border Patrol terrorists strike again

By Bob McCubbin
San Ysidro, Calif.

WW PHOTO: BOB MCCUBBIN

Left, Anastasio Hernández Rojas. Above, protesters gather near the border at the San Ysidro, Calif., trolley stop.

Pedestrians crossing the U.S./Mexico border from San Ysidro to Tijuana pass through a long narrow corridor called the Puerta México. On the evening of May 28 Anastasio Hernández Rojas, 42 years old, was tasered and beaten to death by Border Patrol agents in a fenced off, official area abutting this passageway. A border crosser who wished not to be identified told Diario San Diego, a local binational Spanish language weekly, that she had witnessed the beating by four or five agents as she and several other people waited to pass through the nearby turnstile that provides pedestrian entry to Mexico.

"There weren't many people around at the time," she told the reporter. "When I found out later that this was the person that died, it made me very angry and I don't want this death to go unpunished."

This is not the story given out by the Border Patrol or repeated by the local corporate media. According to them there was no beating and Hernández' death was the result of hypertension and the traces of methamphetamine that they reported were found in his blood. But his cousin, Verónica Hernández, was able to view his body in a Chula Vista hospital and declared it "bastante golpeado"[badly beaten]. She also commented that her cousin had no history of drug abuse. Further, the medical report on his death ruled it a homicide.

The statement of the Raza Rights Coalition and the American Friends Service Committee calling for a protest against this latest act of violence against the Latino/a community read in part, "The killing of Anastasio Hernández Rojas by Border Patrol agents is a clear indication of the climate of hate and repression that is being fomented every day against migrant communities and is tied to the current genocidal and murderous governmental policy.

"The border communities of San Diego repudiate and denounce this aggression against human and civil rights in general, and the impunity evident with the murder of Mr. Hernández Rojas in particular. Furthermore, we demand a swift and transparent investigation of this lamentable case.

"Words can't describe the extremely violent acts that resulted in the death of Anastasio. Our silent protest will help expose the cruelty of a militarized border that is built upon a foundation of hate and repression."

A June 3 mobilization against the senseless killing of Hernández drew hundreds of community residents and activists to the San Ysidro trolley stop near the border crossing. Rejecting a police order that they not march to and rally at the Puerta México turnstile, they defiantly crossed the pedestrian bridge, under which hundreds of slow-moving vehicles waited for passage into Tijuana.

As the motorists became aware of the protesters on the bridge, many of whom were chanting, "Justicia! Justicia!" [Justice, Justice] the clamor of car horns became deafening. At the turnstile a binational rally and vigil took place, with the participation on the Mexico side of the turnstile by Tijuanenses mobilized by the Procuraduría de los Derechos Humanos de Baja California.

Hernández, a 26-year resident of San Diego, leaves behind a spouse and five children who are U.S. citizens. He is remembered as a hard worker and a good father and friend. Anastasio Hernández Rojas, ¡presente! □

Israel's atomic ties to apartheid

Continued from page 6

cupied since the Six Day War of 1967.

In analyzing a shift in the 1970s in U.S. African-American positions on Israel, Polakow-Suransky writes, "Militant Black groups began ... denouncing Israel and South Africa as settler-colonial states that denied basic political rights to indigenous populations." He then goes on, "While the radicals may have been right on that count ... ." (p. 175) This is a pretty damning admission about Israel.

On the first page, the author points out that even politicians like Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, who publicly denounced apartheid and belonged to Israel's "left-wing" Labor Party, still welcomed South African Prime Minister B. J. Vorster to Israel's Holocaust memorial in 1976. Vorster had supported the Nazis during World War II. Numerous times Polakow-Suransky details the ideological congruence between the National Party, which configured South Africa's apartheid regime after World War II and ran South Africa until 1993, and Israel's "right-wing" Likud Party.

In an article "The Most Dangerous Thing That Can Be!" on the Tishrin website May 31, Syrian political analyst Buthaynah Sha'ban writes: "The uproar raised about Israel's attempt to sell nuclear warheads to South Africa was aimed, in part, at veiling the most important and serious part of the book that discloses a deeply-rooted racism in Israel against the Arabs and the Palestinians ... ."

Polakow-Suransky says that if Israel does not solve its conflict with Palestine, it can never become a "normal" state and "worldwide sympathy" will be created for the Palestinians. The question he fails to raise is if the U.S. ruling class, in such circumstances, might reconsider its apparently unwavering reliance upon the Israeli state as a strategic military ally for U.S. imperialist domination of the region.

He is speaking to Israel and the imperialists — and undoubtedly reflects a current within them — when he calls for the "creation" (by whom?) of a viable, contiguous Palestinian state and peace negotiations with Lebanon and Syria. He calls the current status quo "demographically and geopolitically untenable," which becomes clearer every day as the international struggle in support of the Palestinians heats up. □

Looming famine in the Sahel

Imperialist militarism & mining can't help

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

In West Africa's Sahel region the threat of famine has caused dislocation and suffering for millions in Niger, Mali, Chad, eastern Cameroun, Burkina Faso, Mauritania and other states. This region, located south of the Sahara Desert, has been hit by drought and crop failures over the last several months.

In Niger, the worst affected country, it has been reported that 7 to 10 million people are experiencing serious food deficits. In Chad another 2 million need assistance after large-scale crop failures and livestock deaths. Even Chad's military government campaign to distribute food to 1 million people will leave a majority hungry.

International donors have supplied only a third of the $190 million in assistance needed to prevent widespread regional famine. On May 19 ministers responsible for agricultural, livestock development, trade and humanitarian affairs in West Africa held a meeting in Lome, Togo's capital, to plan food distribution and address the needs of civilians displaced by the crisis. (News 24, May 19)

A recent report issued by the Economic Community of West African States indicated that in the 2009-10 harvest year there was a significant shortfall in fodder production in pastoral areas of the eastern sections of the region and an overall 2 percent decrease in cereal production. In Niger the decrease was 31 percent. Agricultural and livestock production constitutes almost 50 percent of the economy in Niger.

The European Union announced in early June that it would increase its assistance by $29 million to the region over last year's $24 million. That aims to supply food to 7 million people in Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso and northern Nigeria. (VOA, June 2)

Crisis reflects failure of capitalist agriculture

During the early 1970s, the mid-1980s and 2005 in the Sahel region, there was drought, locust infestations, and sudden floods that provoked food deficits and the dislocation of population groups. Throughout the Sahel, lack of rainfall can create monumental social crises that extend beyond the respective governments' ability to intervene in time to prevent famine.

International aid agencies based in Western imperialist states must often appeal to the imperialist governments to increase assistance to African countries, which still depend on revenue from exports of natural resources and agricultural commodities, at prices set by the imperialists, to these same former colonial powers and the United States.

Europe and U.S.-based corporate media report the impact of this unequal distribution of economic power without explaining the root causes of food deficits and famine. The powerful capitalist countries themselves face huge budget deficits, rising unemployment and cutbacks in social spending.

Little attention is paid to the impact of the global economic crisis in the former colonial countries. There has never been any real interest on the part of the imperialist states to provide the necessary assistance for African states to become self-sufficient in agricultural production and food distribution.

Although Niger may soon become the world's second largest source of uranium as it doubles its production over the next two years, Niger's people remain overwhelmingly poor. Niger's mined uranium supplies nearly all the raw materials for running 50 nuclear plants providing electricity in France. China's National Uranium Corporation signed an agreement with Niger in 2007 to extract 700 tons of uranium per year from the Azelik region in the north.

U.S. sends guns, not agricultural assistance

The Pentagon has been escalating its military involvement in West Africa. In Mali joint military training exercises are taking place with the United States under the guise of fighting the growing influence of "Islamic extremism" in the Sahel and Maghreb regions of the continent. There are also claims that "400 al-Qaida extremists" are active in the Sahel and Sahara regions. (AP, June 5)

Washington aims to advance U.S. ruling class strategic interests in West Africa rather than seriously addressing the monumental food deficits. An official visit to Africa by Vice President Joseph Biden set for the week of June 7 will avoid discussion of the current food crisis in the Sahel.

The imperialist states have no interest or desire to tackle these agricultural problems since they do not fit into their overall political objectives. The African continent must rely on its own resources in the long run to solve these problems. Only when Africa breaks the chains of imperialist dependency can a genuine program for economic and social development come into being.

Read entire article online at workers.org.

Workers World newspaper

Read by more at home and abroad

By Mark Burton

If a sign of the prestige of a Marxist newspaper is the amount of articles that are reprinted, quoted and translated by other progressive and Marxist websites and newspapers, then Workers World is in good standing. If you scan the progressive and Marxist press on websites from this country and abroad, you will often find Workers World articles. Below is a representative collection of Workers World articles published this year on websites and in newspapers in the U.S. and around the world.

Issues related to African Americans and Africa have been reprinted frequently on progressive websites. Abayomi Azikiwe's article "African-American farmers struggle" on the Black farmers' fight for compensation from the U.S. Department of Agriculture because of past racism was featured on marxistleninist.wordpress.com. A Somali-related website, www.banadir.com, carried Azikiwe's article on possible aggression against the people of Somalia, "Pentagon threatens to bomb Somalia."

A recent article by Jen Waller on the climate conference in Bolivia was republished in nordis.net, a website based in the northern Philippines, and on williambowles.info.

A Workers World article on the March 4 student movement also garnered interest in the international leftist press. The article, "Countrywide struggle unites students, workers, community" by John Catalinotto, featured an interview with Larry Hales, a leader of the youth group FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together). Hales describes the variety of militant actions that students took in defense of public education and against education cuts around the country on March 4, a struggle in which he played an important role.

This interview was translated and published in its entirety by the Italian Marxist website resitenze.org. It was also the basis for articles in the Portuguese Communist Party weekly Avante (avante.pt) and on the website Terra e Tempo (terraetempo.com) in Galician, the popular language spoken in the Northwest region of Spain. (Nearly 100,000 people demonstrated in the main square of Santiago de Compostela on May 17 in defense of the Galician language as part of the struggle for self-determination. WW managing editor Catalinotto is a regular contributor to the above two websites.)

The upsurge in anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle in Latin America over the past decade has greatly increased discussion in the Spanish- and Portuguese-language press concerning progressive politics in Latin America and abroad. There has been a concomitant interest in Workers World articles in the Spanish- and Portuguese-language press.

WW owes much of its success in that arena to the determined work of the Mundo Obrero editorial staff, who translate major WW articles each week to fill one page of text.

For example, the Spanish language website kaosenlared.net reprinted Fred Goldstein's article "The health care bill: What it means for workers" from the MO version. This article was also translated into Portuguese for Avante and posted on odiarinfo.info, an important Portuguese Marxist website, and on the website vermehlo.org of the Communist Party of Brazil. It was also reprinted at rebelion.org, a widely read Spanish-language leftist website, with articles covering all the Spanish-speaking and other countries. This website also recently reprinted Fred Goldstein's article "Jobless recovery: The only solution is class struggle."

Pope and politics

The article that set this year's record for translations was Sara Flounders' analysis entitled "The Pope, pedophilia and the class struggle." It garnered special attention from those who had themselves been subjected to religious education and discipline in their childhood, who became the driving force to translate this article into Spanish, French, German, Italian and Portuguese and to publish it widely in many countries where Catholicism is the major religion. It can be found in all the languages at tlaxcala.es, the home of the Tlaxcala network of volunteer progressive translators, and at iacenter.org.

Workers World articles on the Middle East and Afghanistan are also widely distributed. Sara Flounders' article "US-NATO offensive unravels in Afghanistan: The longest war in U.S. history" was reprinted on the Canadian anti-imperialist website globalresearch.ca. The Italian-based site resistenze.org has regularly translated and published WW articles, including "U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq hit women the hardest" by Joyce Chediac.

Beside some of the sites mentioned above, the British Marxist weekly the New Worker (newworker.org) regularly published articles from WW in their print and web editions.

It's important to note that this is only a summary of a small selection of WW articles republished by the movement around the world. This global distribution and reading of articles by serious political thinkers and actors worldwide highlights the importance of submitting articles to WW and contributing financially to keep Workers World newspaper strong for the entire movement. □

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200.000 marchan contra el racismo en Arizona

Por Paul Teitelbaum
Phoenix, Arizona

Una masiva marcha llenó las calles del centro de Phoenix el 29 de mayo cuando cerca de 200.000 personas se reunieron para denunciar la racista ley SB 1070 y mostrar su determinación de lucha contra este ataque anti inmigrante. Las calles estaban llenas de acera a acera por más de tres millas al dirigirse los/as manifestantes a lo largo de la ruta de seis kilómetros que comenzó en el parque Steele Indian School, serpenteó por el centro de la ciudad y terminó frente al edificio del Capitolio estatal.

La gente comenzó a reunirse en el parque alrededor de las 6 am y ya a las 8:30 inició el mitin de apertura. Los maestros de ceremonias para el mitin de apertura eran una niña y un niño — ambos de 8 años — que dirigieron a la multitud a corear "¡No SB 1070" y "¡Sí se puede!" Excelentes oradores/as incluían a Isabel García de Tucson, quien se dirigió a la multitud en español diciendo: "¡No vamos a tener militarización de la frontera! ¡No aceptaremos la criminalización de aquellos que quieren trabajar"!

Dos mujeres negras de Nueva Orleáns hablaron. Eran sobrevivientes del huracán Katrina que han experimentado opresión racista similar en algunos aspectos a lo que se ha desatado en Arizona. Luego de contar los horrores que la población negra de Nueva Orleáns enfrentó a raíz del huracán, dijeron a la multitud: "Ustedes no están solos. ¡Les respaldamos, Arizona! ¡Vamos a asegurarnos que la SB 1070 se convierta en nada"!

Miembros indígenas de la Nación Tohono O'odham, cuyas tierras tradicionales están en ambos lados de la frontera México-Estados Unidos, explicaron la ironía de cómo ellos, los habitantes originales de este continente, serían sometidos a la discriminación por perfil racial de la medida SB 1070, ya que son gente de piel oscura. Continuaron diciendo que todos los descendientes de europeos que han emigrado al sur de Arizona están aquí como invitados de los indígenas que han estado viviendo en estas tierras, cuidándolas y viviendo en armonía con ellas, desde hace miles de años. Luego, los ancianos Tohono O'odham dieron una bendición tradicional y abandonaron el escenario para dirigir la marcha en su ruta de seis millas.

La marcha tenía contingentes de todo el país, incluyendo BAYAN-USA., el Centro de Acción Internacional y la Coalición 1 de Mayo pro Derechos de los/as Trabajadores/as e Inmigrantes. Grupos de las ciudades californianas de Sacramento, San Francisco, Los Ángeles y San Diego, así como grupos de lugares tan lejanos como Nueva Orleáns y Maryland se encontraban presentes. El aumento de la temperatura no afectó el espíritu de los/as manifestantes, quienes mantuvieron sus consignas militante durante toda la ruta de la marcha. Cuando la marcha pasó por el edificio de la Wells Fargo en el centro de Phoenix, donde el Alguacil Joe Arpaio tiene una oficina, los/as manifestantes se detuvieron y dirigieron sus consignas contra Arpaio, gritando, ¡"Hey, Hey! ¡Ho, Ho! ¡Joe Arpaio se tiene que ir"!

Los/as manifestantes comenzaron a llegar al edificio del Capitolio en horas del mediodía, llenando los terrenos del Capitolio. No fue hasta dos horas después cuando la cola de la marcha llegó al Capitolio. Los/as manifestantes permanecieron en los terrenos del Capitolio por el resto de la tarde.

Cuál camino seguir

En la tarde del 29 de mayo y durante todo el día del 30 varias reuniones de activistas se centraron en determinar la siguiente fase de la lucha contra la SB 1070 y por los derechos de los/as inmigrantes. Las preocupaciones planteadas reiteradamente en estas reuniones fueron la necesidad de unión y la necesidad de que la comunidad de inmigrantes y oprimidos/as actúe por su interés propio e independiente.

El papel que algunos grupos juegan en el movimiento para la reforma inmigratoria fue discutido. Muchos de estos grupos, aunque hacen un trabajo importante en la comunidad, han tratado de desviar la ira contra la SB1070 en espera de una nueva elección y para que el Partido Demócrata satisfaga sus demandas.

Pero, ¿cuántos noviembres tiene que esperar la gente antes de que se haga un cambio real?

Las miles de personas que marcharon bajo el caliente sol de Arizona, como las decenas de miles que marcharon por las calles en Washington DC el 21 de marzo, están exigiendo la legalización de los/as indocumentados/as y poner fin a la guerra contra los/as inmigrantes. No se aceptará nada menos que eso.

La aprobación de la SB 1070 y las otras acciones legislativas que la acompañan, como el ataque a los estudios étnicos, no sólo han provocado la indignación de las comunidades oprimidas, sino que también han cambiado la actitud de muchos/as activistas y líderes de estas comunidades. Muchos/as han perdido la paciencia con los que eligieron y saben que la reforma inmigratoria del Congreso de EEUU no beneficiará a las comunidades indocumentadas y migrantes. Los/as trabajadores/as y los/as oprimidos/as hablaron sobre el sistema del capitalismo y cómo esto es una lucha entre los/as trabajadores/as y el capital.

Mientras el estado sigue adelante con sus planes de reprimir a los/as obreros/as, para dividirles en este momento de crisis económica capitalista, los/as trabajadores/as y los/as oprimidos/as están despertando y viendo a través de la delgada capa de mentiras. Este verano — con un llamado a un Verano de Liberación de Arizona por muchas personas y organizaciones — ofrece la oportunidad de seguir forjando la unidad, la solidaridad y el entendimiento de la lucha de clases necesaria para luchar con éxito en defensa propia y derrotar los ataques racistas como la SB 1070.

El escritor es un organizador de la Coalición de Primero de Mayo de Tucson.

Surgen protestas contra los crímenes israelíes en el mar

Por John Catalinotto

Las acciones criminales de las tropas israelíes a bordo del barco turco Mavi Marmara, matando a nueve de los activistas anti-bloqueo e hiriendo a decenas de personas, a su vez lanzó una tormenta de simpatía en todo el mundo por los ocupantes de la Flotilla de la Libertad y por los/as palestinos/as atrapados/as en Gaza tras el bloqueo israelí.

Los crímenes del ejército israelí durante su invasión de Gaza hace 17 meses ya habían despertado la sensibilidad mundial hacia la población de Gaza y el aumento de hostilidad hacia el estado israelí. Esto hizo nacer un amplio movimiento para boicotear los productos israelíes, forzar a las entidades públicas y privadas a desinvertir los fondos invertidos en empresas israelíes o en bonos del gobierno, y demandar que los organismos internacionales impongan sanciones.

El ataque en la noche del 30 de mayo provocó que este movimiento tomara acción. En todo el Oriente Medio en los países árabes y en otros países musulmanes hubo una respuesta inmediata. En Estambul en la mañana del 31 de mayo miles de personas estaban asediando el consulado israelí en esa ciudad, consciente del gran apoyo popular en Turquía por la Flotilla.

Pronto, el primer ministro turco Recep Tayyip Erdogan, estaba haciendo un discurso, no sólo hostil a Israel, sino crítico del presidente de los EEUU Barack Obama, por no condenar la acción de Israel. Hasta fechas recientes, el ejército de Turquía ha cooperado con Israel.

El régimen egipcio, que también había implementado el bloqueo de Gaza en su frontera con la estrecha franja de tierra, abrió el cruce durante el día para continuarlo en el futuro inmediato.

Hubo manifestaciones de respuesta inmediata en Ammán, Jordania, Damasco, Siria y en Beirut, Líbano, también hubo protestas en Bagdad, Irak. Acciones militantes callejeras tuvieron lugar en Islamabad y Karachi, Pakistán, donde EEUU está utilizando aviones no tripulados en una batalla impopular con el pueblo pastún en las regiones fronterizas con Afganistán.

En el mismo estado de Israel hubo manifestaciones de protesta contra el ataque en Ashdod, Haifa, Jerusalén y Tel Aviv.

A los grupos en solidaridad con Palestina se unieron muchas personas que simplemente horrorizadas por la masacre, salieron tanto el 31 de mayo como en el 1 de junio para protestar el papel de Israel y para exigir una vez más que un fuerte movimiento de continuidad a la lucha para boicotear, desinvertir y sancionar a Israel.

Respuesta generalizada en Europa Occidental

En Atenas, Grecia, miles de manifestantes lucharon con la policía, coreando "Manos fuera de Gaza" y "Libertad para Palestina" Alrededor de 5.000 personas se manifestaron en Estocolmo, Suecia, gritando "Boicot a Israel" y mostrando mantas donde se leía "Enjuiciar a Israel" e "Israel a La Haya", en referencia a la Corte Internacional. (Reuters, 1 de junio) Hubo dos manifestaciones en Bruselas, Bélgica, el 31 de mayo y otra en La Haya, Holanda.

En Italia hubo manifestaciones en 25 ciudades el 31 de mayo y otras cinco al día siguiente. Estas no sólo ocurrieron en las ciudades grandes como Roma, Milán, Génova y Turín, sino también en ciudades más pequeñas como Catania en Sicilia. Unas 2.000 personas salieron en París, Francia. En España hubo manifestaciones en 26 ciudades en los dos días, entre ellas Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Coruña, Gijón y Las Palmas.

En Gran Bretaña hubo una respuesta inmediata el 31 de mayo frente a la residencia del primer ministro, donde cientos protestaron y el movimiento convocó una manifestación nacional para el 5 de junio.

En Berlín, Alemania, más de 600 se manifestaron frente a la Embajada de Israel en una protesta que incluyó a personas palestinas, turcas, israelíes, alemanas, y algunas de los EEUU y otros países. Otra demostración está prevista frente a la Cancillería alemana. Hubo una manifestación espontánea de unas 120 personas en Hamburgo, y una reunión en Múnich. Manifestaciones fueron fijadas para otras 10 ciudades el 1 y 2 de junio.

En Viena, Austria, tuvo lugar una manifestación el 1 de junio ante la Embajada de Israel.

Los informes de activistas de todo el mundo siguen llegando, además de muchas declaraciones políticas de apoyo a los/as palestinos en Gaza y a los activistas de la Flotilla de la Libertad de grupos progresistas en Filipinas, Malasia y desde toda América Latina. Da la impresión de que habrá un movimiento mundial parecido al que tuvo un impacto en la Sudáfrica del apartheid, lo que le hizo ser un estado paria, contribuyendo a la caída de ese régimen represivo. □